**Basic ideas of Horse Whispering: Awesome!!! Wikepedia**

My comments

There are countless "schools" or theories of natural horsemanship but the following ideas are common to most of them:

* Horses are social [herd animals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herd_animal), evolved for social interaction and the ability to escape predators. The horse has a highly developed communication system practiced primarily through [body language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Body_language). It is possible for humans to learn to use body language to communicate with the horse. Horses use ear position, head position, speed of movement, threatening gestures, showing of teeth and swinging of hips, and many other gestures to communicate. They are quick to escalate a behavior if early warnings are not heeded. Similarly, in natural horsemanship, the handler or trainer uses body language along with other forms of gentle pressure with increasing escalation to get the horse to respond. Horses are quick to form a relationship of respect with humans who treat them in this fashion; "firm but fair" is a motto.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-1)
* Most natural horsemanship practitioners agree that teaching through pain and fear do not result in the type of relationship that benefits both horse and handler.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-autogenerated1-2) The object is for the horse to be calm and feel safe throughout the training process. A horse that feels calm and safe with his handler is quick to bond with that person, and the results can be remarkable.
* The human must be knowledgeable of the horse's [natural instincts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_behavior) and communication system, and use this knowledge in their work with the horse.
* Like many other forms of [horse training](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_training), [operant conditioning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operant_conditioning) through pressure and release are core concepts. The basic technique is to apply an [aversive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aversive) pressure LOOK UP WHAT THAT MEANS of some kind to the horse as a "cue" for an action and then release the pressure as soon as the horse responds, either by doing what was asked for, or by doing something that could be understood as a step towards the requested action, a "try". Timing is everything, as the horse learns not from the pressure itself, but rather from the release of that pressure. These techniques are based on the principle of [negative reinforcement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Negative_reinforcement), rather than [punishment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punishment) by physical force, which most natural horsemanship practitioners avoid using whenever possible.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-autogenerated1-2)
* Most natural horsemanship approaches emphasize the use of groundwork to establish boundaries and set up communication with the horse. This can include leading exercises, long reining and liberty work. WE DON’T DO THIS IN CHILDCARE..WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE IN CHILD CARE??? GAMES..Simon Says….LEADING EXERCISES??
* As with all successful [animal training](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_training) methods, there is an emphasis on timing, feel and consistency from the handler.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-autogenerated2-3)

Natural horsemanship has become very popular in the past two decades and there are many books, videos, tapes, and websites available to interested [equestrians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equestrianism). This philosophy has capitalized on the use of behavioral [negative reinforcement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Negative_reinforcement) to replace inhumane practices used in some methods of training, the ultimate goal of which is a calmer, happier and more willing partner in the horse.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-autogenerated1-2)

Natural horsemanship avoids [punishment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punishment) based training methods.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-autogenerated1-2) While natural and gentle methods of training have been around for millennia, dating to the advocacy of gentle methods by [Xenophon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophon) in [Ancient Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece),[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-4) there have also been any number of techniques over the years that attempted to train a horse by breaking the horse's spirit, often forcing it to fight back and then be dominated or defeated.[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-5) Natural horsemanship advocates point out that by removing fear an individual gains trust from the horse. By not scaring and hurting the horse, the horse learns to work with people in a partnership versus as an adversary.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_whisperer#cite_note-autogenerated2-3)

\*\*\*This is why it is so tricky that restraints can be so harmful..If a handler is harming or hurting a child or person in the midst of restraint..the child will respond out of fear and fighting..versus partnering.